Rail link between New Delhi and Hanoi

1029. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal of starting Asia-Rail from New Delhi to Hanoi and whether any steps have been taken to conduct a feasibility study;

(b) whether his Ministry has given 'Green signal' to this project; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) During the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Ministerial Meetings in Phnom Pehn in June 2003, the member countries, namely, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam, agreed to the desirability of a rail link from New Delhi to Hanoi, Rail networks exist in India, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, but there are missing links that would need to be laid to complete New Delhi-Hanoi rail link.

The Government is currently examining the technical feasibility of laying the missing link across India-Myanmar border, a stretch of about 300 km through hilly terrain betwen Jiribam railway station in Manipur and Kalay in Myanmar. The feasibility study will be conducted thereafter. As regard laying of missing links between Myanmar-Thailand-Cambodia-Vietnam and restoration/upgradation of existing rail links, there is an ASEAN rail connectivity programme from Singapore to Kunming that is expected to take care of the same.

Indians in Pakistani Jails

1030. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian fishermen, civilians and defence personnel in Pakistani jails, as on September 1, 2003; and how many of them have been in jails there for over five years;

(b) whether Goverment have any reports about their condition in